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ABSTRACT

The administration of French immersion program in an elementary school in Alberta, Canada, by anglophone principal with little or no knowledge of French is examined in this study. Interviews with eight anglophone elementary school principals found that a lack of knowledge of French was not perceived as a barrier to effective implementation of French immersion programs, although French language proficiency was viewed as an asset. Essential factors for effective administration of French immersion programs are commitment, understanding of program context, communication, and interdependent relationships. Fifteen implications for practice and eight recommendations for further research are included. Appendices include correspondence and questionnaire samples, and transcript and logbook extracts. (57 references) (LMI)

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THE EXPERIENCES OF ANGLOPHONE ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS WITH FRENCH IMMERSION PROGRAMS IN ALBERTA

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Purpose of Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate what it means for an anglophone principal with little or no knowledge of French to administer a French immersion program in an elementary school in Alberta. The specific questions addressed by the study were:

1. What were the administrative experiences of principals of French immersion programs?
2. What kinds of issues and concerns about administration were raised by the principals in this study?
3. In what ways did a lack of knowledge of French affect the principal's role as an administrator?
4. What critical incidents had the principal experienced because of a lack of knowledge of French?
5. How have principals coped in these situations?
6. What advice would principals give to other French immersion school administrators?

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Research Design

The design of the study was based upon the interpretive paradigm which purpose was to bring to light the meanings and understandings of the subjective realities of the work of the anglophone principals of French immersion programs.

Because of the time involved in obtaining a depth of focus, the number of respondents was limited to eight elementary school principals with little or no knowledge of the French language. The administrators were from four Alberta school jurisdictions and their administrative experience varied from three to over ten years from which two to eleven years were as an administrator of a school with a French immersion program. Five respondents were male and three were female. With the exception of two administrators, all respondents were principals of dual-track schools. One participant administered a multicultural centre while another was a principal of a French immersion centre.

The piloted data collection instrument was the semi-structured interview. The research questions stated above formed the basis of the interview guide. The format of the interview consisted of open-ended questions to avoid directing, controlling or narrowing information potentially available from respondents and to encourage a flow of conversation. All interviews were taped, transcribed and then sent by mail to the respondents in order for them to check for accuracy of information.

Based upon content analysis, the colour-coded transcripts were examined so as to formulate and record categories emerging from the data. Finally, themes resulting from underlying messages were outlined.

To ensure credibility and trustworthiness of the data analysis, I resorted to member-checks, peer debriefing and the audit trail as recommended by Guba and Lincoln (1981) in their article on naturalistic inquiry.

Summary of Major Findings

In essence, respondents in this study were of the opinion that a lack of knowledge of the French language did not hinder their role as an administrator of a school with a French immersion program, although they admitted that French language proficiency would definitely be an asset. However, they did perceive certain factors to be essential to the effective administration of a French immersion program. They are: commitment, understanding of the context of French immersion programs, communication and depending on others.

Commitment

During the interviews, many of the administrators alluded to the concept of commitment. The meaning of the notion of commitment on the part of the principal varied from one respondent to another. However, all agreed that it was a critical factor in the successful implementation and continuation of a French immersion program. The interviewees also recognized the high level of commitment to the second language programs on the parts of both the immersion parents and teachers. "Being sold on the program" and administrator attitudes were strongly emphasized.

Understanding the Context of the French Immersion Programs

Many respondents talked about the notion of "misconception" as being the root to many potential problems associated with French immersion programs. Therefore, they pointed out the need for all directly or indirectly concerned with the program to develop a greater understanding of the context of French immersion programs.

Some of the respondents interviewed were clear in stating that although the French immersion programs are different from the regular English programs, French immersion students were in fact no different from non-immersion students. They talked about having to drive this message across to students, teachers and parents alike. In particular, one principal was adamant in stating that the belief that immersion students were the "cream of

the crop" is a fallacy while another found that there is some preselection of immersion students.

A number of the participants of this study commented on the strong commitment and involvement of immersion parents in the school. A couple of principals talked about having to channel immersion parents' energies in the right direction if they themselves are to keep "running the show". Another principal noticed that immersion parents involved at his school which is situated in a higher socio-economic area pose questions of a pedagogical nature rather than strictly asking if their children are behaving or not.

Several respondents in this study indicated that there existed some opposition to French or immersion programs in one form or another on the part of non-immersion students, teachers and/or parents who feel that preferential treatment is given to the immersion program at the expense of the non-immersion program. Non-immersion teachers fear the loss of their jobs and non-immersion parents and students do not want to be displaced due to the immersion program. A fair number of the respondents commented on the existence of an underlying current of prejudice or resentment towards French. However, one respondent suggested that hard feelings toward French and the immersion program are to be expected since resistance is part of the process of planned change.

It was found that there is a wide variety of French immersion teachers in Alberta due to the supply and demand factor. Some participants alluded to the fact that non-Albertan French immersion teachers arrive in this province with a different mindset. They commented on the fact that acculturation of these teachers takes time.

Communication

Many of the participants in this study stressed the importance of developing and maintaining good public relations with non-immersion parents as well as immersion parents and the local community at large. They referred to public relations not as putting on a good face for the public, but rather as informing and educating parents and other citizens in the

local school community about the program as much as possible to avoid feelings of prejudice to arise in the school or in the community. Half of the principals interviewed saw their role as "selling" the immersion program. One of the respondents saw the French immersion program as "becoming less and less of a selling job" because of its proven benefits. In addition, many respondents found themselves working closely with a parent group called "Canadian Parents for French" which has been known for its lobbies in the recent past. However, some principals have designed the set-up of the school parent association so as to include representatives of each program at the school and/or representatives of each class in order to encourage all parents in the school to work together for the school as a whole.

All principals in this study emphasized the need for the principals to demonstrate good interpersonal skills when dealing with others because they felt that they must be able to show leadership and sensitivity towards both immersion and non-immersion students and teaching personnel. They talked about having to perceive and recognize the needs, concerns and personal problems of others and of being skilled at resolving conflicts involving students and/or teachers. Participants found themselves concentrating their attention and efforts on issues such as the following: focus on one school rather than one program, staff cohesiveness, immersion teacher attitudes, working across programs, fairness and sensitivity to languages spoken in the school.

Depending on Others

Depending on others is the major coping strategy used by all respondents when affected by a lack of, or little knowledge of, the French language. Many principals admitted having a heavy reliance, or dependency, upon resource people who are formally, or informally, selected to assist them in situations calling for a knowledge of the second language. These resource people can be one or many of the following: external consultants from Alberta's provincial department of education, or from the University of Alberta's

French faculty of education, Faculte St-Jean; second language consultants or supervisors from the school district's central office, a member of the administrative team i.e. the assistant-principal who may happen to know French, or again, a key immersion teacher who masters the second language. Areas with which principals need help are: evaluation of French immersion staff language proficiency, evaluation of teachers with problems, judging students' achievements, dealing with curriculum matters and oral and written communication such as on the phone or face-to-face conversations, correspondence and ordering curriculum material.

In terms of evaluating the French immersion teacher's ability to teach, several respondents said that they look for criteria that should be present in the teacher's performance irrespective of the language of instruction. Some principals admitted having difficulty with detecting "nuances" such as the teacher's level of questioning. A few principals commented on the fact that they "talk more" to their French immersion teachers to "stay on top of it".

During the interviews, principals expressed their concerns towards French immersion. Moreover, they were asked what specific advice they would give to incoming anglophone principals of French immersion programs. Some suggestions were common to several respondents whereas other comments were unique to each individual.

Concerns

The main concerns expressed by the principals with reference to French immersion were: availability of human and physical resources, language versus pedagogical skills of French immersion teachers, acculturation versus militancy of unilingual francophone teachers and the transfer of French immersion students to the regular English program.

Advice

Despite the growing availability of workshop for beginning versus experienced anglophone administrators of French immersion programs, many respondents in this study

have pointed out the value of personal experience and of experiences of others over and above that of workshops although they have found these worthwhile in some respects.

Some principals' advice to incoming administrators was to "make sure" that one builds a network of resource people, be they central office personnel, second language supervisors, teachers and/or others who are willing to help the principals cope with their "human deficiencies".

Public relations and interpersonal skills were considered to be vital by a number of principals. They stressed the importance of dealing with conflicts related to the French immersion program which may arise in the community or within staff members to maintain and/or promote a "positive school climate". One principal pointed out that if "administrators try to overlook those problems they don't go away, they become bigger".

Other pieces of advice offered by respondents were: increasing one's knowledge of the program, increasing one's knowledge of French, hiring one bilingual person to be part of the school administrative team, reassuring parents, telling parents the truth, getting rid of one's biases, supporting teachers versus watching them burnout, having francophone teachers respect proper channels of authority, acknowledging program needs and other tidbits of advice.

Summary of Themes

The administration of French immersion programs by anglophone principals has affected both the personal and professional lives of respondents. Themes that have emerged from the data are: a growth experience, working with others, balancing programs and the potential for conflict.

Reflections

The undertaking of this study has of course encouraged me to reflect upon the issue of anglophone principals and French immersion schools. These reflections based on related

literature and personal experience have resulted in the strengthening and/or the transformation of some of the views which I held prior to this study.

Reflections Based on Related Literature

One can find many similarities between the findings of the review of related literature and the results of this study. First, both sources acknowledged the importance of understanding the context of the French immersion program and of recognizing the implications of bilingual education. However, although some researchers put enormous emphasis on French immersion as planned change, only one respondent stressed its importance. In fact, Alan felt that many problems that he had to face as an administrator would not have occurred had the implementation of the French immersion program been treated as a process of planned change instead of a product and had the school board and school district administrators been more committed to the program than they were in reality. For instance, problems related to parent groups and lack of curriculum resources would not have had to be dealt with.

Second, there is much agreement between related literature and this study on the role of the French immersion parents in terms of the nature of these parents, their goals and social milieu influences. Where they are contradictory findings within the related literature as well as between literature research and this study are in regard to elitism. Some respondents felt that immersion students were no different from non-immersion students as far as academic achievement, intelligence and general background. For example, Heather had much difficulty in convincing her non-immersion teachers of this view.

Third, the findings between literature research and this study in relation to school factors are comparable in terms of the role of the principal, the role of the French immersion teacher and curriculum resources. Although respondents agreed that the role of the principal as instructional leader was critical, they all felt that they could fulfil their responsibilities as such even though they absolutely had to depend on others to help them

in this area. Research literature points out the need for principals not only to understand teaching methods as well as subject matter taught, but also have knowledge of the French language when dealing with specific components of the second language program. In this respect, there is a discrepancy between research literature and the data of this research as to whether principals should know French or not.

Last, the findings between research literature and this study are similar in relation to student achievement. Both sources of data indicate that generally, students in immersion do well and that the program is suited to all students. As a general rule, principals in this study seemed to agree with the research literature's statement although some felt that immersion would not be appropriate for students whose parents were not sold on the program or who lacked confidence in their children's abilities.

It is obvious that as a researcher, I value the contributions of research to the field of education. However, as I read about multicultural education and more specifically French immersion, it became clear to me that since French immersion is a relatively new field in Canada and since researchers have only really begun to pay attention to it in the last fifteen years, research alone should not be considered as the answer in French immersion education, especially when major decisions are to be made. Research findings should by all means be studied and referred to, but at the same time should serve as a guide rather than the "gospel truth". Because so little is known for sure in the field of French immersion, there is a tendency in all of us to hang on to research findings as tightly as possible even though these may be subject to change. For example, although "the benefits of an early starting age have been debated extensively for several years" (Day & Shapson, 1988, p. 291), there still exists the popular belief that early immersion is more effective than late immersion. This belief is strongly maintained "because research has also demonstrated a strong relationship between achievement and amount of time spent learning the second language" (Day & Shapson, 1988, 292). These authors also state that "However, empirical

studies have uncovered little evidence of the superiority [of] younger second language learners. They suggest, on the contrary, that older learners are quicker and more efficient because of their more advanced cognitive skills" (p. 292).

Another example is related to French immersion students who are experiencing learning problems and to decisions pertaining to the transfer of these students to regular English classes. Current research (see Bruck, in Cummins, 1983) indicates that most problems experienced by students are cross-lingual. Therefore, Bruck, in particular, promotes leaving the student in difficulty in the French immersion class and offering him/her remediation. She believes that in these cases, academics will suffer no matter which language of instruction the students are taught in, so they may as well acquire the second language oral proficiency. It should be noted that research states that students of below average ability can learn the oral skills in the second language with no major problems despite the fact that they may be experiencing learning difficulties and/or do poorly in academic subjects. Despite Bruck's recommendation, the issue of keeping or transferring the students with learning difficulties remains problematic in Alberta because there are few remediation services available to French immersion students. Hence, in this case, research has to be relied upon cautiously because the context in which Bruck's findings occurred is different from ours. It is important to note that Bruck's findings resulted from studies done in Montréal where French is not a minority language.

The context in which second language research is done is important to consider when studying its findings. For instance, one should be cautious when studying second language education findings found in the United States as opposed to Canada. One has to remember that the contexts of second language education differ quite markedly between the two countries. In Canada, French stands as one of the two recognized official languages whereas in the United States, English is the only official language. In this country, the rights of the French minority with regard to their language are protected by the 1982

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Across the southern border, the rights of minority language groups are not officially recognized. In addition, the Canadian government provides considerable funds in support of French as a second language education. In the United States, few funds are available for second language education. Some parents must pay for instruction of a second language to their children (Rickards, 1984).

Thus, administrators, educators and parents alike must carefully consider the context in which research findings are found. Also, because French immersion is a relatively new research field, one can expect new research findings to evolve, change and even contradict past ones.

Personal Reflections

This study has shown the anglophone principals' perceptions of their role in relation to French immersion education. They indicated that the lack of knowledge of the French language has not affected their role as administrators although they admitted knowing French would be an asset. However, it would also be interesting to find out what the subjective realities of the French immersion teachers are concerning the lack of knowledge of French of their principals to see if they feel that students and themselves are indeed affected by it.

In this study, a number of principals indicated that they rely heavily on "unofficial" head teachers or coordinators to assist them in various areas. Although this coping strategy is perfectly logical on the part of the principal, there is always an inherent danger that immersion teachers will be given responsibilities in areas that are sometimes outside of their jurisdiction, especially when it comes to matters of evaluating language and pedagogical skills of their colleagues! Another potential danger is that these teachers can become overworked and burned-out over a given length of time. These factors can in fact affect their teaching performance because of lack of time to fully attend to their teaching duties.

Moreover, because these teachers who receive no official title or added renumeration are assigned added responsibilities of an administrative nature, and are not always given extra preparation time, credit or recognition for their efforts, they could become resentful and/or lose some of the enthusiasm that they initially exhibited when entering their respective schools. I believe that principals must re-think this coping strategy as it can easily lead to the exploitation of "unofficial head teachers".

A last reflection worth noting is that as I was interviewing principals and analyzing the data, I noticed that because of the lack of qualified French immersion teachers, school boards and principals often had to choose between two types of teachers when hiring French immersion personnel: those who possessed adequate French language skills and less than adequate pedagogical skills, and those who had good pedagogical skills and mediocre oral and written language skills. I found that some school jurisdictions had a tendency to select the first type because administrators were concerned about the notion of the French immersion teacher being the sole language model to the students. Other school jurisdictions tended to opt for the second type of teachers because of their concern for staff unity. Boards who hired francophone teachers because of their French language competencies appear to experience more problems with staff unity because acculturation of these teachers takes time. Therefore, the selection of French immersion teachers remains a big dilemma. Perhaps, the provision of ongoing orientation workshops for new teachers, especially those from Québec, would dissipate the "militancy" problems, and permit school boards to hire teachers with adequate language proficiency skills more often than they do.

Implications for Practice

There are several implications for practice that have resulted from this study. I have numbered and listed them below for the sake of clarity.

1. School district and school level administrators must not only be perceived to be, but also be committed to the concept of second language education.

2. School district and school level administrators would benefit from attending workshops and/or courses on the implementation process of French immersion and its problems.
3. Because of the nature of the French immersion context, French immersion principals must be open-minded and willing to adapt since their new role will most likely require transformation of views and personal and professional development.
4. Principals would benefit from being given more time to prepare for their new role by their school district administrators. Time would allow them to instill in them a better understanding of the philosophy of second language learning as well as a greater understanding of the program needs such as human and physical resources, etc.
5. Principals must keep abreast of new research findings which may affect important decisions regarding French immersion issues in their district or their school. The issues could pertain to student transfers, helping factors in student achievement, benefits of early and middle or late immersion, etc.
6. Principals need to examine a variety of ways to promote instructional leadership and quality instruction.
7. Administrators of French immersion programs must develop and maintain effective public relations and interpersonal skills due to the politics of French immersion in a dual-track school. This means that they must be aware of the expectations of parents and the local school community as well as the special needs of students and teachers.
8. Principals must become sensitive and knowledgeable about the French culture as they are working with many francophone teachers.
9. As some school jurisdictions already are and others will be leaning more and more towards hiring one bilingual administrator to be part of the school administrative

team, it would be useful for unilingual principals to acquire a basic understanding and working knowledge of the target language.

10. Principals should be encouraged to make contact with other principals of French immersion programs in order to discuss potential or existing problems related to immersion before and after implementation of the program.
11. It is crucial for principals to set up a network of resource people knowledgeable in French immersion and in the French language, so that they may rely upon them when appropriate.
12. When relying on unofficial head teachers or coordinators, principals should provide extra preparation time for them to meet the added administrative responsibilities required of them.
13. Principals should encourage their French immersion teachers to perfect their French language oral and written skills and/or pedagogical skills.
14. Orientation sessions for French immersion teachers (especially those from Québec) who are new to the district would be useful.
15. Principals should encourage and schedule grade level meetings to take place between teachers of different programs.

Implications for Research

The following implications for research are based upon the findings of this study. In essence, all respondents found themselves unprepared when they were first asked to administer French immersion programs. At least one respondent stressed the importance of school district personnel to better understand the context of French immersion programs and the need for long-range planning. All participants found that although the lack of knowledge of French did not hinder their role as an administrator, they admitted that it would definitely be an asset. Some principals confessed that they could not appreciate the "nuances" of French instruction. It would be interesting to find out to what extent teachers

perceive this as a problem. In addition, much of the principals' time is spent "balancing programs" to maintain unity and harmony. What about pro-active leadership in school effectiveness? Finally, most respondents insisted that immersion students do not differ from non-immersion students. Research findings are quite contradictory on this issue.

Based on the findings of this study, it becomes evident that in order to improve the effectiveness of schools with a French immersion program, the field of education would benefit if further research were done on the following topics.

1. Effective ways to educate and prepare anglophone principals to administer French immersion programs.
2. Effective ways to educate and prepare school district personnel about second language education.
3. Comparison between the effectiveness of schools run by anglophone and bilingual (French and English) administrators.
4. Perceptions of French immersion teachers on the effectiveness of anglophone principals of immersion programs.
5. Comparison between the effectiveness of dual-track schools and French immersion centres.
6. Differences between non-immersion students and immersion students.
7. Differences between immersion and non-immersion parents.
8. French immersion as an educational innovation worthy of planned change.

Although much more is to be learned in the field of French immersion instruction, it is hoped that this study will help shed some light and understanding on the difficult role of anglophone elementary school principals in the context of French immersion programs in Alberta.

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APPENDIX I

March 28, 1989

(Name of Principal)

My name is Nicole Lamarre and I am now beginning data collection for my thesis project which I am presently working on in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Degree of Master of Educational Administration in the Department of Educational Administration at the University of Alberta. My thesis topic is "The Administration of French immersion programs in Alberta's Elementary Schools by anglophone Principals". This thesis proposal has already been approved by my advisor, Dr. Margaret Haughey and by the University of Alberta Educational Administration Ethics Review Committee.

I am contacting you upon recommendation of a colleague of [name and position], who suggested that you may be able and willing to participate in my study. This study requires principals with little or no knowledge of the French language who are presently administering French immersion programs at the elementary level in your district.

If you chose to be a respondent in this study, your participation would entail the following:

1. Filling out a very short demographic questionnaire.

2. Participating in a one hour audio-taped interview, scheduled at your convenience, and dealing with the five research questions which you will find attached.

3. Reading a copy of the transcription of the interview, which I will mail out to you, for accuracy of information.

4. Participating in a telephone or an in-person follow-up interview to permit you to add, omit, change, or confirm the information discussed during the first interview.

Please note that although quotes will be used in the thesis publication, both anonymity and confidentiality in regard to names of principals and schools will be respected. Also participants will be able to opt out of the study at any time for any given reason. In addition, a copy of the results of the study will be forwarded to the participant's school district central office.

.../2

In order to expedite the paperwork to Field Services requesting permission from school districts to have their principals involved in this study, I will be telephoning you shortly at your school to inquire as to your decision whether or not to participate.

In the event that you will be able and willing to participate in this study, please fill out and sign the release form, which is also attached.

Thank you very much for your attention to this matter. Looking forward to hearing from you.

Yours truly,

Nicole Lamarre

Attachments

APPENDIX II

PENDING PERMISSION OF THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT, , I,

_____, AM ABLE AND WILLING TO PARTICIPATE IN NICOLE LAMARRE'S THESIS STUDY AS PER OUTLINED IN HER LETTER POSTDATED

MARCH 28TH, 1989.

I UNDERSTAND THAT ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY OF NAMES OF PRINCIPALS AND SCHOOLS WILL BE RESPECTED DURING THE ENTIRE STUDY AND IN ITS PUBLICATION AND THAT I MAY OPT OUT OF THE STUDY AT ANY TIME FOR ANY GIVEN REASON.

SIGNATURE

DATE

APPENDIX III

Spring, 1989

Dear [Name of Principal]:

As agreed upon, I am forwarding to you two interview transcripts of the interview that took place between the two of us on [date]. One of the copies is of the original transcript whereas the other copy is the transcript which was revised by myself to keep the anonymity of the people and school mentioned during the interview.

Also in the left margin of the transcript, you will find comments that I have made about my interpretation of the interview content. Please indicate in the right margin your own comments about the interview in addition to changes, omissions, etc.

Please be advised that I will contact you at the end of the month to follow-up on your comments about the interview transcript.

Thank you so much for your cooperation in my study. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at either U of A - 492-4913 or at home - 352-8872.

Yours truly,

Nicole Lamarre

APPENDIX IV

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How would you rate your ability to communicate in French using a scale from one to three? Please circle the appropriate answer.

	Little	Moderate	Excellent
understanding	1	2	3
speaking	1	2	3
reading	1	2	3
writing	1	2	3

2. Including this school year, how many years of administrative experience have you had in schools? Please circle the appropriate answer.

   a. 0 - 2 years

   b. 3 - 5 years

   c. 6 - 10 years

   d. over 10 years

3. Including this year, how many years of administrative experience have you had with French immersion programs only? Please circle appropriate answer.

   a. 0 - 2 years

   b. 3 - 5 years

   c. 6 - 10 years

   d. over 10 years

4. Which category best describes your school? Please circle appropriate answer.

   a. Dual track school: a school in which there is coexistence of both the regular English program and the French immersion program.

b. French immersion centre: a school which solely houses French immersion programs.

c. Multicultural centre: a school which houses a regular English program, a French immersion program as well as another second language program.

d. Other: please specify.

5. Which grade levels does your school offer to the student population?

a. K - 6

b. 7 - 9

c. 10 - 12

APPENDIX V

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT EXTRACT

Nicole: M-m-m. Okay I think that brings us to a second question which is like the critical incidents that you may or may not have experienced because of a lack of knowledge of French. It is quite related to the first questions,but perhaps it would be, ah call for an example that you could walk me through in which you as an Administrator wished you had known the French language but didn't.

Alan: Again, ah thinking about this question, the only real problem that I had and I've run into it on two or three occasions is doing teacher evaluation, it's really the only problem where you can't (pause) fully understand what the teacher is trying to do and I feel that there is a void in there and we can take Teacher B for example since she went through this and then she and I had a very real experience in that is that I probably wasn't able to help her as much (pause) as I should have been able to had I been able to understand exactly what she was tying to do. Even though we discussed this in English maybe it wasn't coming through, then again maybe it was the lack of experience of which I will ah elude to later on here in dealing with French immersion totally. There's, there's a preparation situation there that I think is very, very necessary and I wasn't completely prepared in that particular area.

Nicole: M-m-m.

Alan: And I'll talk about that later too. Uh...

Nicole: Okay so for example in the instances of evaluation, how do you cope in those situations? I know that you bring in evaluation teams.

Alan: Yeah.

Nicole: Or external evaluators.

Alan: I bring...

Nicole: So that is how you would cope with the situation.

APPENDIX VI

LOG BOOK EXTRACT

Feb 20

SOME ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT ANGLOPHONE ADMINISTRATORS

Until recently, I had strongly felt that administrators that were fluent in both the English and French languages would be more effective principals. This assumption was based mostly on the fact that anglophone principals cannot adequately play an important instructional\educational leadership role vis-a-vis French immersion teachers. To me it appeared that anglophone administrators could not adequately provide in-services or evaluation for their French immersion teachers. After observing and talking to some anglophone principals and after reflecting upon the anglophone principals that I had worked with\under in the past, I realized that although a few of them are anglophone, they were and still are effective principals. My new bias is now perhaps that the lack of or limited knowledge of the second language may not be a detriment to anglophone principals if they have exceptional communication skills (in its most general meaning) with people in general. However in cases where this does not exist, the anglophone administrator with poor communication skills and who lacks a network of qualified resource people will perhaps be less successful as a French immersion administrator.

Better Understanding of Life

Feb 25 - Ideas

. Principal A: Administering a French immersion program is a learning process (professionally and personally) in which he experienced growing pains.

Feb 26 - Ideas

- Principal A:. Getting to know each other (p. 12) (understanding other culture, language, people) 2" staffs in 1"
  - Getting along (as personalities) (p. 17)
  - Getting ready (preparation)
  - Getting help
  - Knowing what goes on
  - Getting to know the program, the F.I. context

Understanding a New Context

- Respecting differences
- Knowing where we're going (p. 8-9)
- Worry and be happy (p. 10)
- Learning a lesson "Growing Pains"
- Being open-minded

In a Note to Principal A,

I Have Presented to Him the Two Following

Categories and Have Asked Him to Comment on Them:

1. Getting to know each other and getting along.
2. Knowing where we're going and getting ready.

I will seek his feedback at the beginning of March.

While Reading "Reawakening Aesthetic Insight", an article by Jan Jagodzinski (1988), U of A, a few notions reminded me of Principal A. Check the following references in future.

p. 126... "It is through our failures that we learn who we are. Repair is nurturing and healing"...

p. 142... "The personal cannot be separated from the political (public) lifestyle, as many feminists claim, must be congruent with one's political style"...

Note: Perhaps this is why Principal A has to become more open-minded towards French immersion so that his personal style would have to come into harmony with the public image that he found himself having to develop and maintain.

Feb 27th `89: Chose 2 classmates for member checking

Carol - Lynn Oldale

Del Litke

Feb 27th `89: New themes creeping up

- Making a difference - Making one's mark.
- Owning the program - Being (or becoming) responsible for it.
- 1 + 1 = 1
- "Hey, wait a minute!" . "You too, hey!"
- "Don't be afraid, it's not going to bite you!"

- Being "one".
- "Yes, there are side-effects".

Maybe conceptual framework should be changed to following: